Letter No 142. Wednesday. 14th May 41.

Major. J. H. Massey.
6 Palestinian Coy. The Buffs.
Middle East Forces

My own dearest sweet darling-

Your 34th letter arrived today, & distressed me terribly, for were feeling so hopeless & tragic & worried about everything. Thank goodness I had already had your no. 35, by which time you had cheered up again considerably, & had at least at last become reassured about money, & knew you did not have to worry any more about it, or the overdraft, or how to pay the doctor & the nursing home - & you had fixed up with the nursing home; & also I had had your ~~letter~~ p.c. of April 12th about having found a house in S. Devon. I must not begin to run on again about that tragic misunderstanding - but I do feel so strongly now that a very large part of your misery & unhappiness has been directly caused by that. How to pay the doctor - & how to pay the nursing home - & how to afford a house & things for the baby. And what if the B.C. & W. pay stopped. And the disappointment of the situation after you had been so careful. And the thought that I was not caring a damn - & what was I doing with the money, anyway. And how we should be fixed after the war. Oh darling - I am longing to have your letters, apologising for misjudging me. For must understand, my darling, that if ever the situation were to become difficult, & they were to stop my ½ pay - which I do not think they will do - I should cut down everything, & live on the bare minimum. My only thought is for you to have enough - & for us to be able to have a good beginning after the war - so that the return to Yorkshire will not be too horrifying for you. But the thing

has happened now, & cannot be undone. But I am sure you would have been happier & more contented if you had not been so worried about this. And then my letters seem to have struck a bad patch at the very worst possible moment - I suppose you may have thought again that I was so busy spending money, I had no time to write to you. Poor, sweet, darling - I had a forboding about misunderstandings. I pray there will be no more.

It hurts me terribly that you have had such a rotten, dull, worrying time during the pregnancy, that you have been so nervous about the result of the baby & the birth. I am living for news - it must come any day now. I am convinced that all is going to be well - there is no good reason why it should not be. Lisa was perfect, & her death was a tragic accident. And the tragedy of the boy was partly bad doctoring - nothing will ever convince me that he was not a perfectly normal child.

Oh sweetheart, I hope that before my next letter, or even before I have finished this one, I shall have had the good news from you, & then all your sufferings of the last few months can be put behind you - & we can then enjoy the present, look forward to the future, & what we are going to do & where & how.

And if only you had found a pleasant place to stay, & had, consistently, pleasant people to be with. Instead of that, it has been just the opposite, most of the folks have been a positive menace to your peace of mind. I wish you could have been with Vera & Harkin all the time. Vera is so

kind & amusing – & Martin admires you so much.
Do you remember the first week end we spent with Ian? You had on a black silk evening dress, & we sat on the sofa, in the dark, in front of the fire – & it was the first time I felt the softness of your sweet, adorable legs. Oh my beloved sweet heart, what thrills lovely times we have had. I think so often & so much of all the times & all the places where we have made love, & I rack my brains to remember all the details. I am so sure of this – that there is no man in all the world who has so much lovely happiness to remember – & so much more to look forward to, when all this ghastly business is over.
It was marvellous to hear you say, in one letter, how you wished dog my footsteps when I came home & vowed never leave me. I said exactly the same things to you in one of my letters – & I do think it is lovely, how, so often, it is obvious that we are thinking so much alike, & proving it to each other by our letters, from so many miles away. But, if you can put up with me, I plan that we should be inseparable – once we are together again. We shall be able to get so tremendously much out of life together. I hope we shall have some pleasant & interesting people to know – but I feel now that if we can only have each other, & the baby, & maybe another baby – every thing & every body else is very incidental & unimportant.

It seems pretty certain that we shall have a few hundred pounds when this war is over, & it will be so wonderful to be able to find a house we both really like, & make it as we want it; & most certainly have a really fine studio for you: a big one, with a good floor, & plenty of light, & big windows to throw open in the summer & heat for the winter. And what shall I do in my spare time? Well darling - I think I will be a perfect husband, lover, companion, father, or try very hard to be: and after that, I shall garden - yes, really! - & fish, & read, & may be play tennis. Those last four being all things which you can do, & take an interest in. Gardening, you will very much approve of, of course. Tennis is a good game, & is good for both of us. And fishing is an interesting, meditative sport, & takes one, usually, into nice country. Golf is given up, of course, because you have tried, & just do not enjoy it: an occasional game perhaps, but I certainly shall not join a club. And then, I thought I might become an expert at casting - even in bronze.

Another hard day - now all those happy thoughts are making me to sleep - so I will go on tomorrow. Goodnight, my lovely sweetheart. I shall kiss you & hold on to you, when I am in bed. xxxxxx Harry.

Thursday - 15th May. I had a p.c. dated April 23rd from

from today - & it has made me very happy, because it was a cheerful one - you had Peggy staying with you - & it means that you are safe & sound & well, & reasonably happy, up to three weeks ago. And the cottage in S. Devon is apparently all fixed up - I am looking forward to hearing more about this. I like to see your p.cs. addressed to "Major"! Though I almost feel that Major T. H. Massey looks more dignified than Major Harry Massey - perhaps not. In any case, this No. 64582 is not necessary - that was all part of that wretched address which I gave you when I left England, & which I shall never forget as long as I live. There are still 12 of those first letters of yours missing; perhaps they will arrive someday.

I am writing this just before lunch, & I hope to be able to do some more this afternoon. The Palestine Orchestra is here again, & so of course I am going this evening - this time with Ben-Ami & Moscovitz; the British rehearsals are too jazz bound.

Your p.c. also said you had had no letter from me for 6 weeks. It really is morally disappointing - for me as well as for you - when I think of all the letters I have sent & the time I have spent in writing them, & I have thought myself such a model, & how pleased you would be, & perhaps even a little surprised, to get so many letters from me. Normally, there is nothing I like to do better, than to go to my room, & relax, & take a couple of bottles of beer, & letter - & just write to you & think of you - & kiss - & look at your photograph. But sometimes, it is rather an effort, when I am feeling tired & unhappy & sad & homesick for you - but often I have pushed myself on to write, or

even to start a letter, so that you should have a constant supply. But the air mail ones must surely have started again, soon after you wrote that - the sea ones will arrive much later. I hope there was nothing too important in those - I cannot remember now.

I was delighted that you were so pleased about my majority - it was lovely to hear you say you were very proud of me, & thought me clever. I must say that the more I think of it, the more certain I am that it would not have been if I had not made up my mind I was going to get there, & put both in with all I have. And there is such a tremendous difference between captain & major - financial responsibility, position, & everything else. I cannot think what I should do if I had to be second in command to one of these majors: I feel vastly superior to them, anyway. As for you not looking like a major's wife - well, darling, if you don't I'm glad of it. That's all I can say. And I don't see why I should not look like a major, just because you think I have a chub face! What would you say if I became a Lieutenant Colonel - & you became the Colonel's wife? But I do not think you need worry too much about that at the moment.

I saw a confidential report on myself from the Area Commander, the other day. This is a routine affair, twice a year, & the officer reported on has to see & initial his report, whether it be good, adverse, or what. Mine was reasonably complimentary, & said that I was hard-working & conscientious - that I had considerable

personality, initiative, drive – that I had produced a satisfactory unit – but that I had much to learn: so, on account of the latter, I was not recommended for further promotion. I suppose I cannot grumble about that, as I was only a lieutenant three months ago. If they only knew how much I have had to learn in the last four months, perhaps the old boy might have qualified his final remark! But it is pleasant to get another good report, may be of help one day.

It is 12-0 o'clock, I am just back from the concert – I will write a little more, because I am going out again tomorrow. This time to have dinner on board one of H.M. ships, with the Captain. My friendly Hospital ship was in again the other day, I was asked to a small sober cocktail party. I met this man then, he was a pleasant, amusing, friendly bloke, very interesting, of the last war, the China Seas etc – asked me to go & see his ship, which I did on Monday. He came & had some dinner in my Mess on Tuesday, entertained us all considerably – now I am paying a return visit tomorrow. I am rather looking forward to it. I have spent 6 weeks on one of H.M. Troop ships getting out here – I have been on various of H.M. Hospital ships – but I have never had dinner on one of H.M. ships – R.N.

It is rather pointless how all of my social life seems to be in connection with visiting ships nowadays – they are the only people from whom I accept invitations, really – because I know I cannot be drawn into the social swirl in this way.

The concert was rather disappointing & has left me with a blank mind about it – so very different to the

last one, which thrilled & excited me. The conductor was very ordinary, & it was v. bad, & they seemed v. flat. Between by symphony, "the Pastorale" came first, & was terribly dull, I thought. Then a Concertino for Solo Trumpet & Orchestra, by the first violin of the orchestra, which was quite good, but there was too much fancy stuff from the drums, & cymbals, & triangle & so forth. Then Le Tombeau de Couperin, by Ravel - which was rather dull. And finally, "Euryanthe" overture, by somebody called Carl Maria von Weber - which was rather pleasant. It was a pity, because I had been looking forward to this. Peter gave me a tremendous welcome when I returned to my room, & scampered about & whimpered with pleasure & wagged his stumpy tail. He is becoming a great little companion, & is now very fond of me & always pleases to see me. It really does make such a difference, having a dog to welcome me, & for me to be fond of. He knows very well that I am his boss & master - although he gets him most of his meals, & sees far more of him than I do - but he will always leave him & come to me. And he treats Chinamen quite differently too - he is rather barkish as well as mine - & just leads him a dance & plays jokes on him. Whereas with me, he is always a bit careful. He is growing amazingly rapidly, & getting very strong too. I really must have his photograph done - together with my crowns. I really must go to bed now - it's 1-30. Why am I so slow? I just think about you so much -

but I enjoy it, so why shouldn't I?
I will finish this off & post it. Tomorrow. Goodnight, darling sweetheart. I love & adore you. XXX. H.

Friday 16th May. I have been occupied all day today, & now I have to go out in 20 minutes – so I must hurry & post this first thing tomorrow morning. This dirty news about Syria has come through today, so things are getting a little more now. The next few weeks should be interesting. This Rudolf Hess business must have caused a stir at home. I must describe my new quarters to you, where I am writing this, & where my future letters etc will come from. Now that I am a major, I have what are known as Field Officers' Quarters, & these are somewhat palatial compared with mere Captains & below. Instead of one room as before, I have two rooms of the same size – in one of which I have my bed & clothes etc – & in the other there is a door in between – tables, easy leather chairs, chest of drawers, & a sort of book case & beer cupboard combined. And the next door, I have my own private bathroom with wash basin, lavabo, & kitchen dept. So you see I am quite well off, comparatively. Though it is not as good as it sounds, because the floor is concrete, & the walls are rather a dirty yellow, & the roof hangs over & does not allow a great deal of light to come. All of which makes the place pretty dreary, & very obviously part of a barracks. It's really rather depressing, most of the time, though it helps to have more room, & nobody else making a mess in my bath & places. My other place, in Billets, was much more cheerful, with plenty of light & pretty little garden to look at, & a verandah with flowers hanging about. But I suppose I must just make the

best of it all. And I must tell you more about this bloody barracks in my next letter, & how we moved back into it.

I saw in General Orders the other day that Eric James is now a Captain, & on some sort of Staff somewhere. Good man, he has had to wait rather a long time for it, & I am pleased he has got it now. He must have gone a bit green if he saw that I had gone up too, & he was stuck where he was. But then he is a pretty good stick in the mud. I also saw that Capt. T.A.H. Perrott had been promoted Major. Did you ever meet Jack? — I think you may have done at the "Ways". He was a great "chum" of mine at my prep school. He is a very nice fellow indeed, & I hope I may meet him sometime. I have heard nothing of Harris Gaudy — I should simply love to have a good old gossip with him again.

And now I must fly.

All my love to you, my darling sweetheart — & many long, loving kisses — look after yourself my dearest, & be careful — of yourself & the baby.

Always your own Mary

This is my stamp!

Major.
Commanding No. 6 Pealetinien Coy. The Buffs.

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Mrs. H. Massey.

~~c/o. Mrs Lark.~~

Carseland

~~Lyn-wood~~ Pillory Hill

~~Candleways Lane~~ Noss Mayo

~~Beaconsfield~~ near Plymouth

~~Bucks.~~ S. Devon

England.

BY AIR MAIL.